

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

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The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

Once again, the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) welcomes you as our EPA Administrator and looks forward to working with you to enhance our nation's environment. We understand that new leadership often means a new direction. With this thought in mind, we wish to bring to your attention our thoughts on EPA's 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan Change Document. Many of these comments were presented during our initial review of the document; however, we have added new comments based upon changes that have occurred over the past year.

- We are very encouraged to see that the topic of climate change is now found in EPA's Strategic Plan. We highly recommend that the Strategic Plan describe policies, long-term strategies, and performance measures to measure the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- EPA's efforts that address disadvantaged communities should receive a higher level of consideration in the Strategic Plan with clear objectives and performance measures to monitor success.
- Our nation imports a very large amount of products and foodstuffs from other countries, some of which have been found to contain serious contaminants. EPA's Strategic Plan should contain goals, objectives, and performance measures that both prevent and detect problems prior to distribution with the nation.
- Some of the side effects of agriculture uses are linked to increasing nitrogen loads in our river systems and coastal waters. The Strategic Plan should identify ways that EPA can partner with its sister agency the USDA in developing policies and strategies for maintaining agricultural productivity while reducing unintended consequences.
- The Strategic Plan should provide some discussion about the probable course of action that the Agency will undertake once a goal is achieved. For example, will funds be reallocated? Will monitoring continue? Is the goal simply removed and replaced with another?
- The Strategic Plan contains new strategies for improving program implementation with Tribes. As there is little "Indian Country" in Alaska, the Strategic Plan should also make mention of the need to work with Alaskan Native communities. Furthermore, the document should make mention of the need to work with the Hawaiian Native community as well.

- Our experience has shown that less of an investment is necessary to keep a natural resource free of contamination than it is to clean one that is polluted and contaminated. The Strategic Plan should recognize this fact and identify goals that protect unimpaired waters and other resources. For instance, the Strategic Plan should include goals, objectives, and performance measures for watersheds and estuaries that are not presently impaired with the goal of keeping them unimpaired.
- Many places in our nation are now challenged by greater demands being placed on dwindling supplies of clean drinking water. Adequate supplies of clean drinking water are basic to our economy and community well-being. Thus, the Strategic Plan should also include goals, objectives, and performance measures for maintaining adequate drinking water supplies.
- The amount of debris, drift nets, and plastics that exists in our oceans poses a major threat to the viability of marine mammals such as the monk seal, and many species of sea birds, turtles, and fish. Without serious attention to reduce these contaminants many species will be lost to future generations and the web of marine life disturbed with resultant fish stock crashes. The Strategic Plan should include a set of objectives and performance measures to address the levels of debris, contamination, and decimation of marine life resulting from plastics and drift nets.
- Climate change is causing dramatic changes to our oceans, such as higher water temperatures and increased acidity which are causing cascading changes to sea-life upon which much of the world depends as a food source. Since our country is composed of more ocean acreage than land acreage we believe that EPA's Strategic Plan must address ocean related environmental matters.

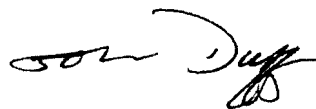
A strategic plan provides the blueprint for achieving an agency's goals and objectives. We believe the 2009 – 2014 EPA Strategic Plan Change Document provides goals and objectives worthy of the agency's environmental leadership. We also believe that the document can be improved upon by incorporating the aforementioned suggestions.

Thank you in advance for considering these recommendations. The LGAC looks forward to working with you on environmental matters.

Sincerely,



B. Roy Prescott, Chair
LGAC



John Duffy
Climate Change/Indicator Workgroup